

**Andrew Jackson to Thomas Hart Benton, May 14, 1844,  
from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by  
John Spencer Bassett.**

class=MsoNormal>TO THOMAS H. BENTON.

Hermitage, May 14, 1844.

My dear Col, I have this moment received your letter of the 3rd instant, and with great debility, pain in my side and head hasten to reply to it, with the candor of a friend. you are aware of my friendship for, and confidence in Mr. V.B. Having received many letters, making enquiry whether the letter of Mr. V.Buren and others on the Texian question which had lately appeared in print, and sent me, had wrought any change in my views, other than those expressed in my letter written nearly a year past to the Hon<sup>ble</sup> A. V. Brown, my answer of the 13th instant to those several enquiries has been made and published in the Nashville Union to which I must refer you. some further explanation is due on this subject.

My Republican friends in congress on the discovery of the fact, that the cession to Spain of Texas was made when Spain had offered the river Colorado as the boundery, upwards of a year ago, addressed me on this subject. they were the strongest friends of Mr. VanBuren in Congress. The annexation never has been viewed as a party question here and from the support given by you and Mr. V.B. to the attempt by negotiation with Mexico without the consent of Spain both you and Mr. V.B. were in favour of annexation etc etc. and President Tyler, had no agency in this business nor never had any strength here, for the nominee as President in 1844, and nothing but the Ground taken by you and Mr. V.B. in your letters can give him popularity on the question of the annexation of Texas.

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Many there are who are willing to approve all his good acts, and condemn all others on the principle, "render unto Cesar etc. etc. etc."

The great Texian meeting lately held at Nashville by all parties, shew that it was not a party question, and all believed that Mr. V.B. and particularly you from your various essays in favour were strong advocates for its speedy annexation until Mr. V.B. letter burst upon the democracy like a thunderbolt knowing, as we believed you must have known, the great pressure upon Texas, that she must be annexed to the United States, or seek aid from some foreign power—for proof of this I extract from a confidential letter from the highest source the following. Her pride had been chafed by two rejections by the United States, and I was applied to to aid Those members of congress, to sooth President Houstons feelings on this occasion and obtain his consent to another tender of annexation etc. as it was confidentially made known the depressed state of Texas and her necessity in debt, no revenue and no credit to borrow, would compell her to seek aid from some European power England.

I viewed the subject with the disinterested eye of the patriot, the defensless situation of Neworleans, and our whole western Frontier open to foreign influence and Indian depredation the situation of our slaves the great and important interest of the south and west etc. etc. with great Britain influence, no other power she could flee to for aid, govern Texas, and introduce abolition on our confines. I had no doubt but the same principles and comity towards Texas that was extended to Mexico would be adopted.

The Government of the U. States offered to treat with Mexico for a retrocession of that part of Louisiana so foolishly ceded to Spain in 1819. This retrocession you and Mr. V.B. both sustained. Could the democracy now believe that you would not sustain the annexation of Texas when offered by Texas as an Independent nation, acknowledged as such and Treaties made by the most important foreign nations, with her as well as by the united states. Could the democracy believe, that when the key thus offered in peace by Texas so essential to the safety, the peace, and prosperity of the whole Union would have been

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rejected by you and Mr. V. Buren, when you had so well sustained the Government in the attempt made to regain Louisiana now Texas from Mexico, without waiting for the consent of Spain. No my dear friend such an idea was not entertained by a single democrat, but all believed, that you would seeize the key thus offered to our future prosperity and safety by Texas. You would say with me, receive the peaceful Boon, lock the door of our national peace safety and prosperity against all future contingencies, and place this important key in the safe of the united states, there to be guarded by the strength of this Union. The Union must be 0317 293 preserved , and this would place it on a lasting basis as the rocky mountains so that wicked ambitious man could not shake it.

Texas is all important to the north as it is to the south, and the union would by this annexation and our laws extended over Oragon be established on the rock of ages. If Mr. V.B. had only closed his letter in favour of annexation he would have been elected I may say almost by acclamation, or if he had closed it thus after his lucid expose, "that since he left the administration he had no channel thro' which he could Judge of the truth of the facts on which the rumors, were founded that foreign influence, were secretly engaged to produce injury to the safety and great interests of our country, then he hesitated not in saying I am in favour of the annexation of Texas forthwith regardless of all consequences, viewing the safety of the Republic the supreme law, he would [have] got 9–10th of the votes of the whole south and west. Clays letter has destroyed him with all Whiggs of any kind of principle. I hope for the best, but fear results. A few of us has kept down any nomination here resting on the Baltimore convention. I refer you to Major A. J. Donelson and remain yr. friend,

Extract—"In the event of a failure of annexation we should have our independence guaranteed by the united states. If not we must and will inevitably be driven into commercial relations with the European powers, that will secure us against all further molestation from Mexico etc. etc." note—There is no other power but England that is prepared and seeking influence over Texas, and the blow is meant against the safety

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of the united states, looking at the defenceless situation of N. Orleans and her plan of abolition.